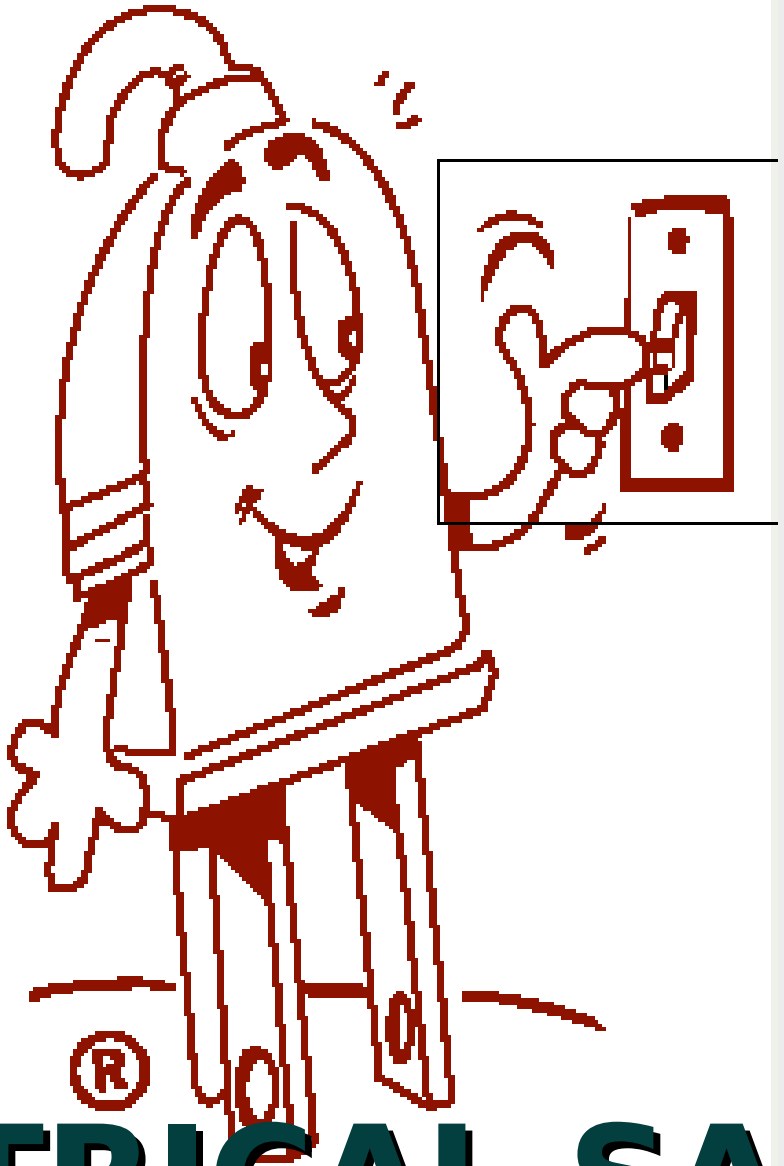
HOME



ELECTRICAL SAFETY

Electrical System Inspection

- **If your last inspection is:**
  - ^ 40 or more years ago, inspection is overdue.
  - ^10-40 years ago, inspection is advisable, especially if substantial electrical loads (high-wattage appliances, lights and wall outlets or extension cords) have been added or if some of the warning signs discussed are present.
  - ^ Less than 10 years ago, inspection may not be needed, unless some of the warning signs, described are present or temporary wiring has been added.

Electrical System Inspection

- You may live in an area that is not served by state or local electrical inspectors, so that no inspection record will be found on your electrical panel. In that case, use the age of the house as guide to the probable need for an inspection.

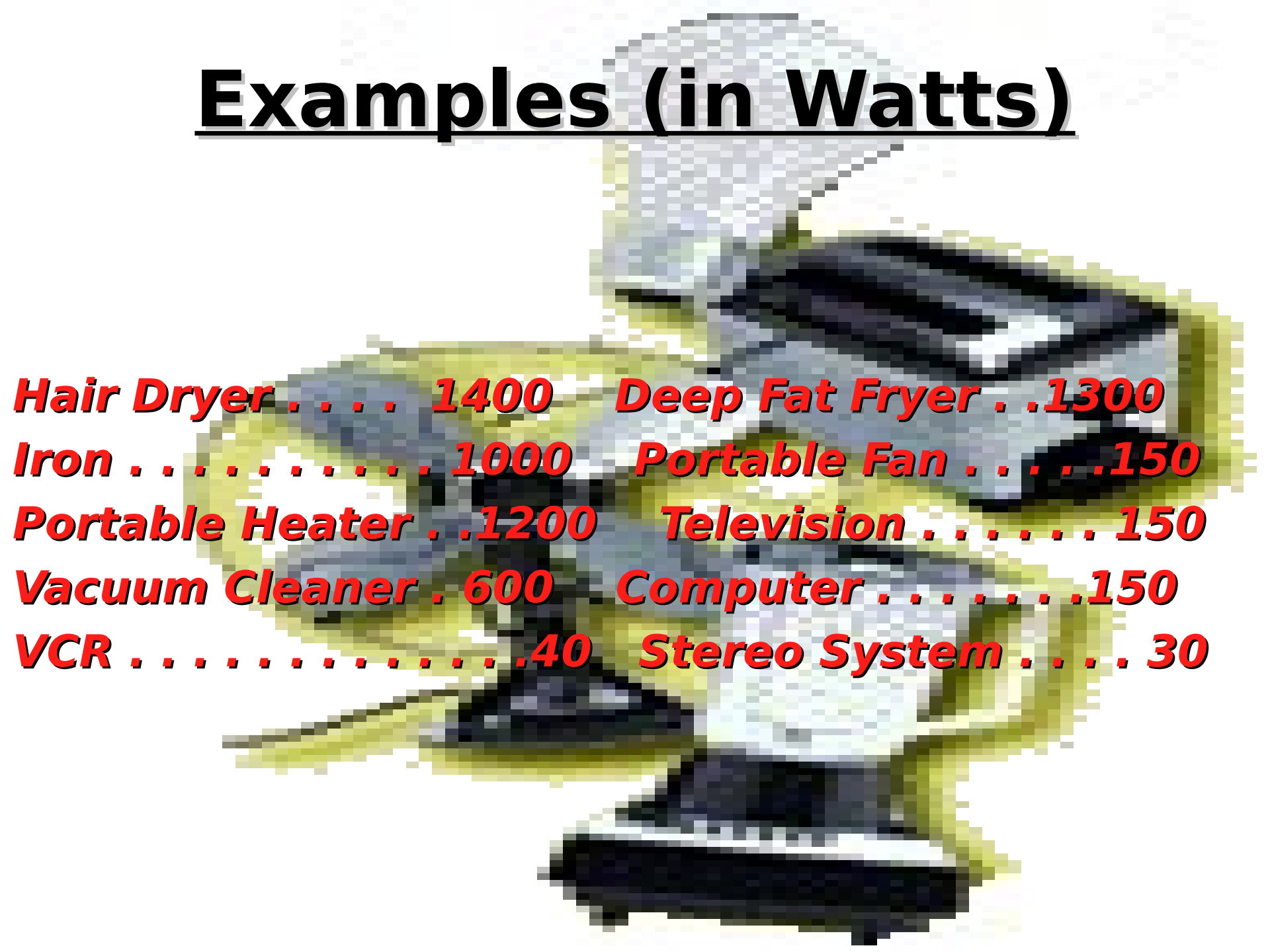
Appliance Power Budget

- Circuits can only handle a specified total wattage of all the electrical products connected to that circuit. If too much wattage is plugged into a circuit, serious electrical problems can result. Here is a guide to knowing what a circuit can handle:

  15-ampere branch circuit can carry 1500 watts.

  20-ampere branch circuit can carry 2000 watts.

Examples (in Watts)

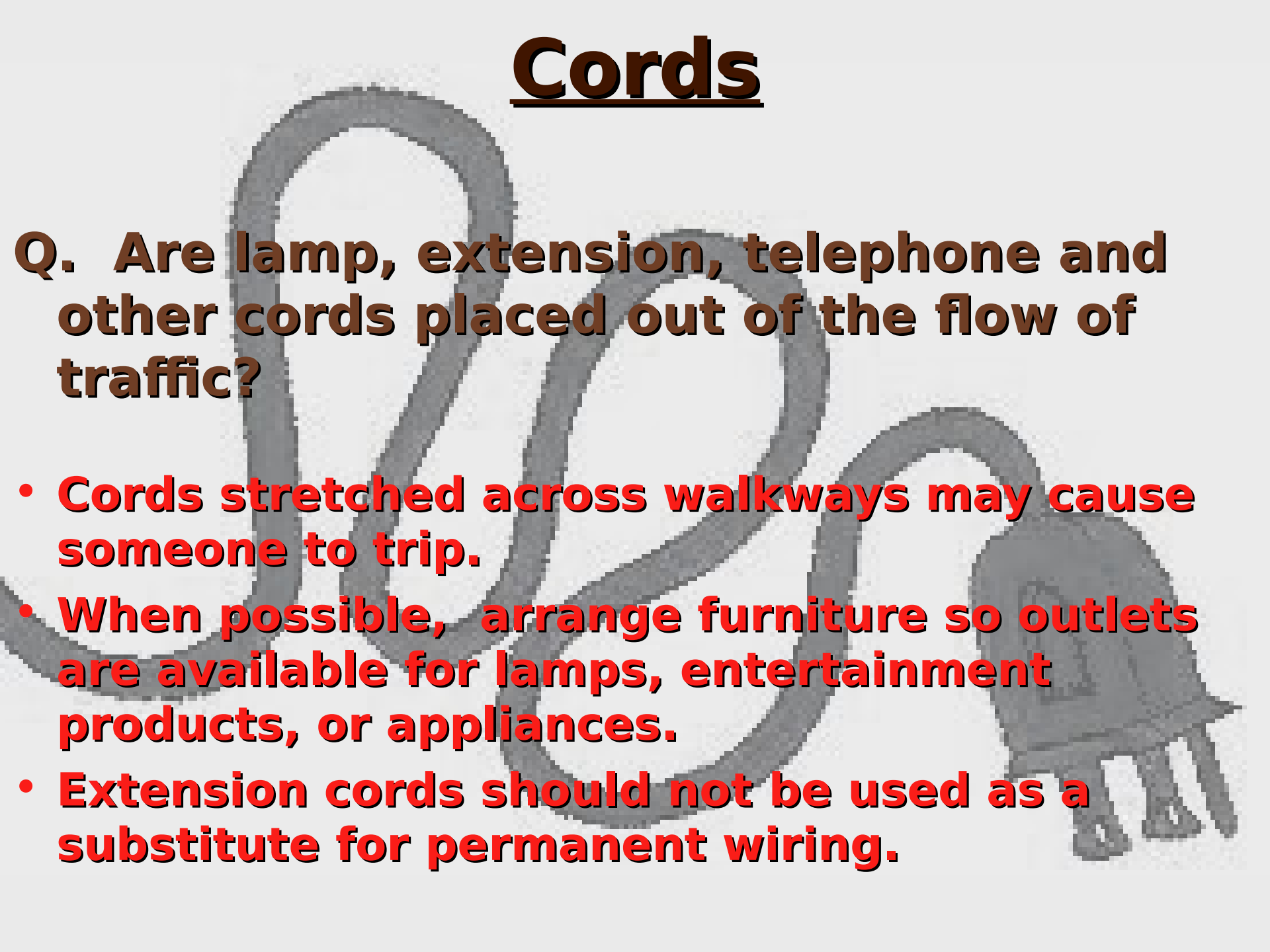


Hair Dryer	1400	Deep Fat Fryer	1300
Iron	1000	Portable Fan	150
Portable Heater	1200	Television	150
Vacuum Cleaner	600	Computer	150
VCR	40	Stereo System	30

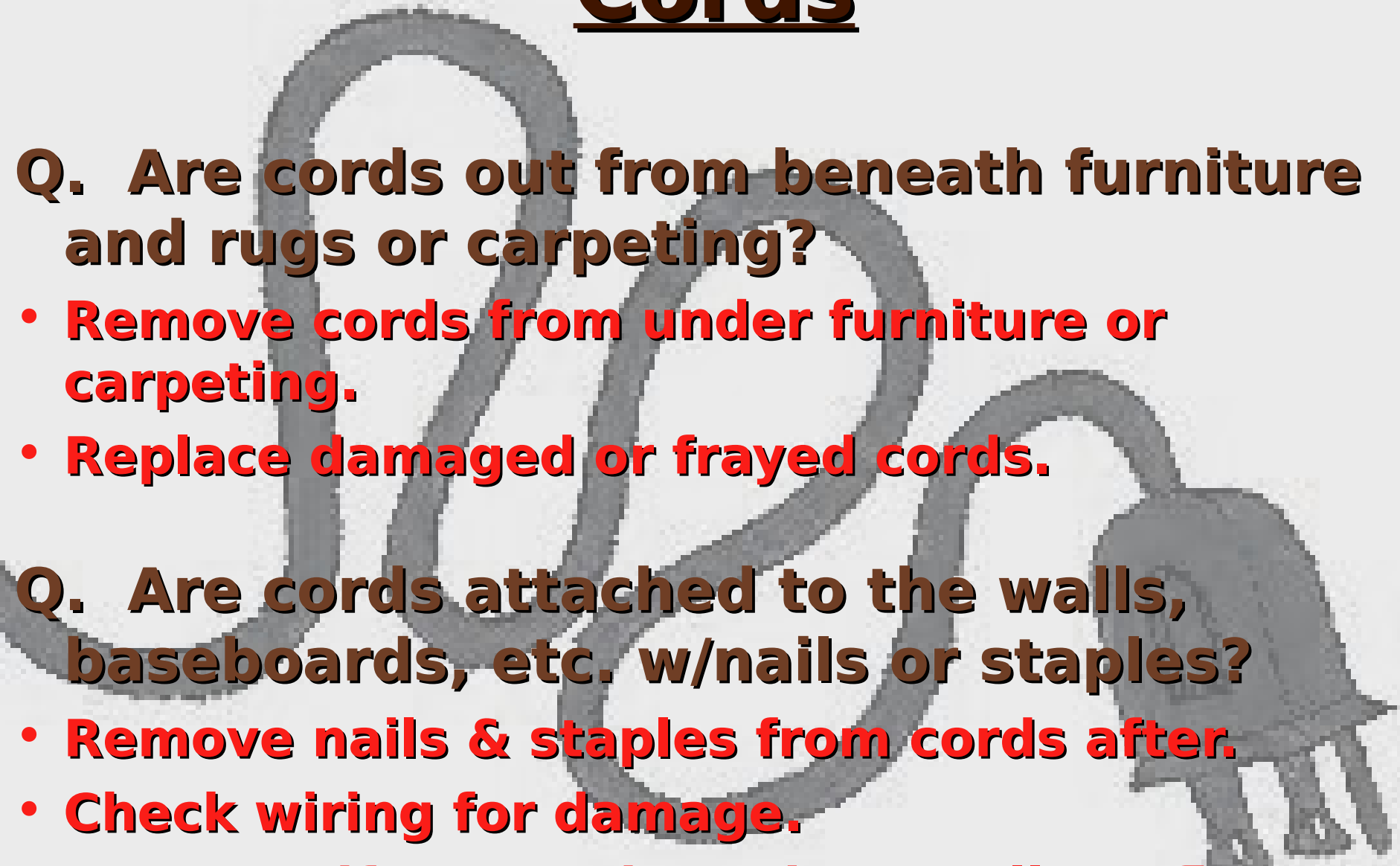
Cords

Q. Are lamp, extension, telephone and other cords placed out of the flow of traffic?

- **Cords stretched across walkways may cause someone to trip.**
- **When possible, arrange furniture so outlets are available for lamps, entertainment products, or appliances.**
- **Extension cords should not be used as a substitute for permanent wiring.**



Cords



Q. Are cords out from beneath furniture and rugs or carpeting?

- **Remove cords from under furniture or carpeting.**
- **Replace damaged or frayed cords.**

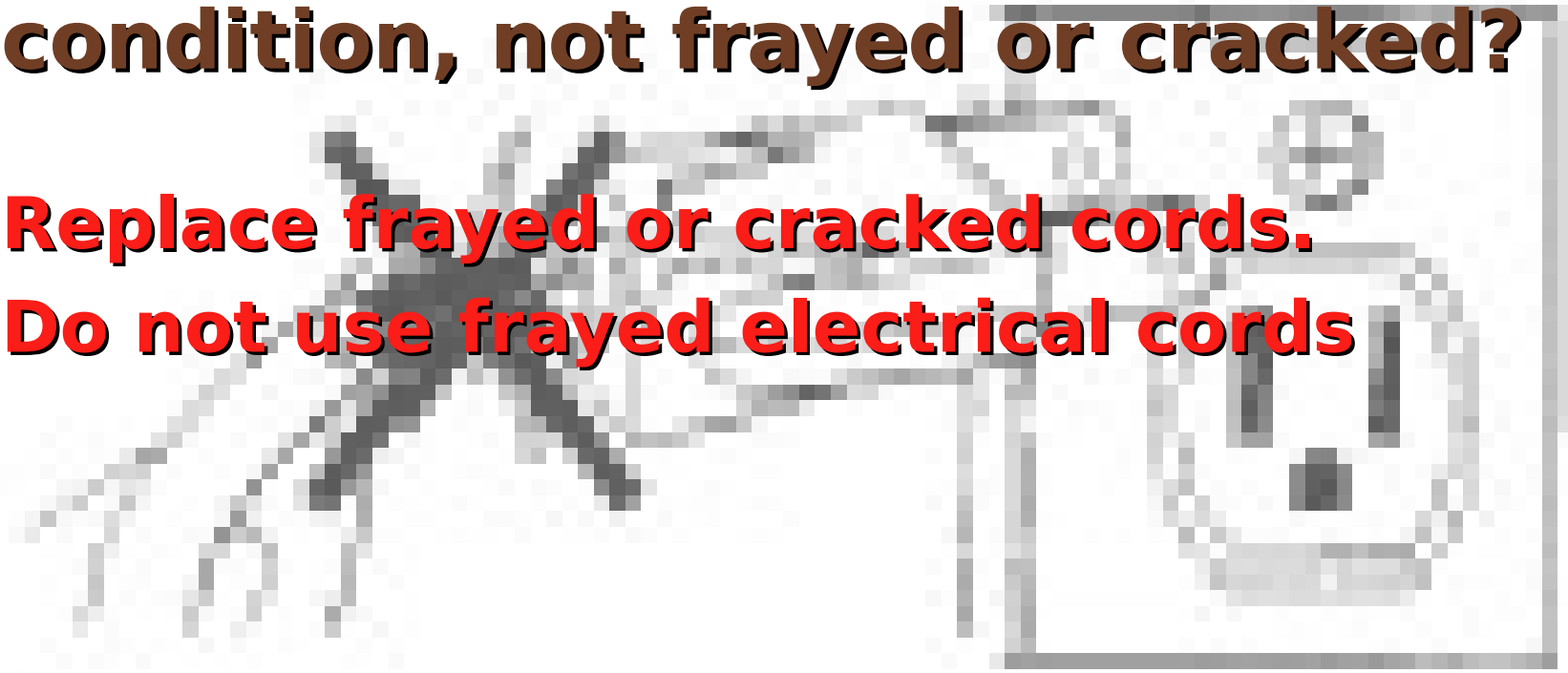
Q. Are cords attached to the walls, baseboards, etc. w/nails or staples?

- **Remove nails & staples from cords after.**
- **Check wiring for damage.**
- **Use tape if to attach cords to walls or floors.**

Cords

Q. Are electrical cords in good condition, not frayed or cracked?

- **Replace frayed or cracked cords.**
- **Do not use frayed electrical cords**



Cords

Q. Do extension cords carry no more than their proper load, as indicated by the ratings labeled on the cord and the appliance?

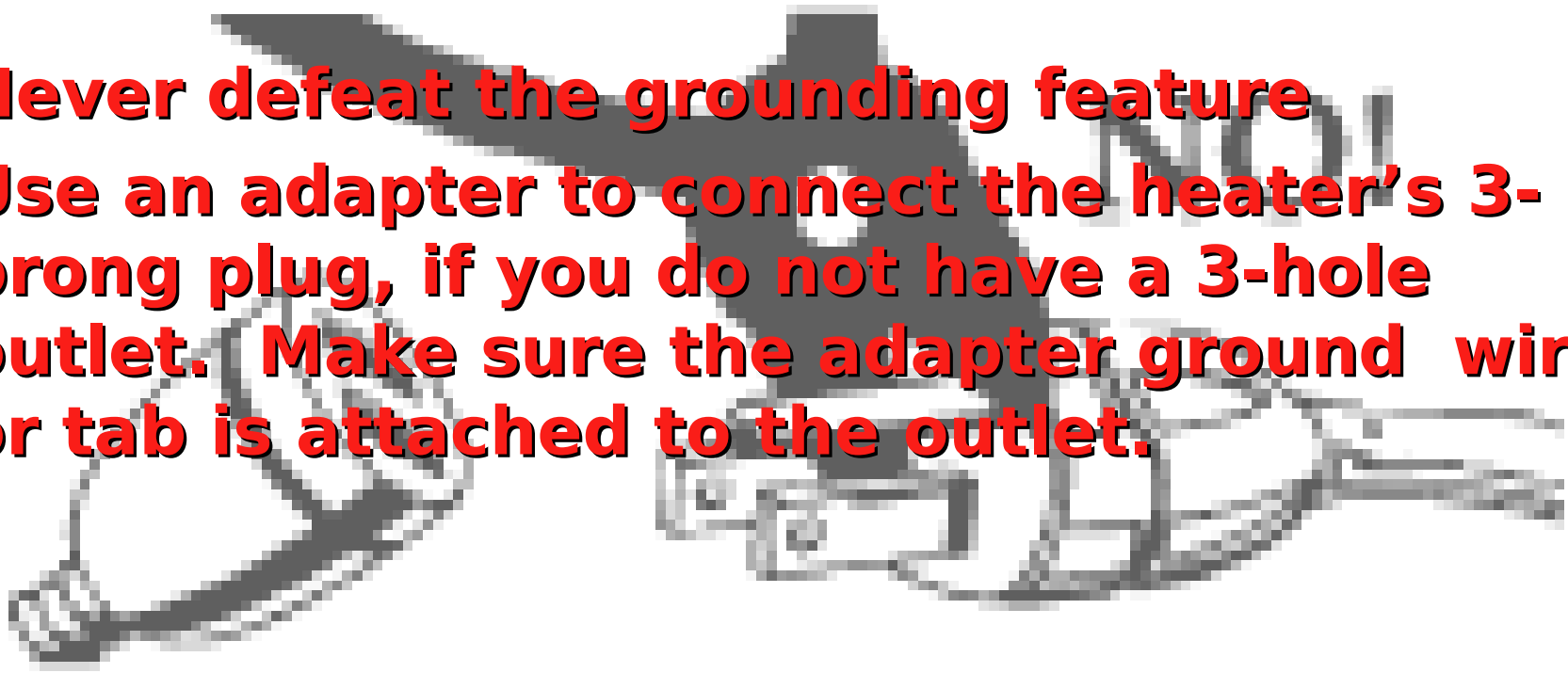
- **Replace No. 18 gauge cords with No. 16 gauge cords. Older extension cords using small (No. 18 gauge) wires can overheat at 15 amps or 20 amps.**
- **Change higher rate or unplug some appliances, if the rating on the cord is exceeded.**
- **Use an extension cord having a sufficient amp or wattage rating, if an extension cord is needed.**

Cords

- Use cords with polarized or three-prong plugs.
- 3 Buy only cords certified by Underwriters Laboratories (UL), Intertek Testing Services (ITS), or Canadian Standards Association (CSA)

Cords

Q. Are heaters that come with a 3-prong plug being used in a 3-hole outlet or with a properly attached adapter?

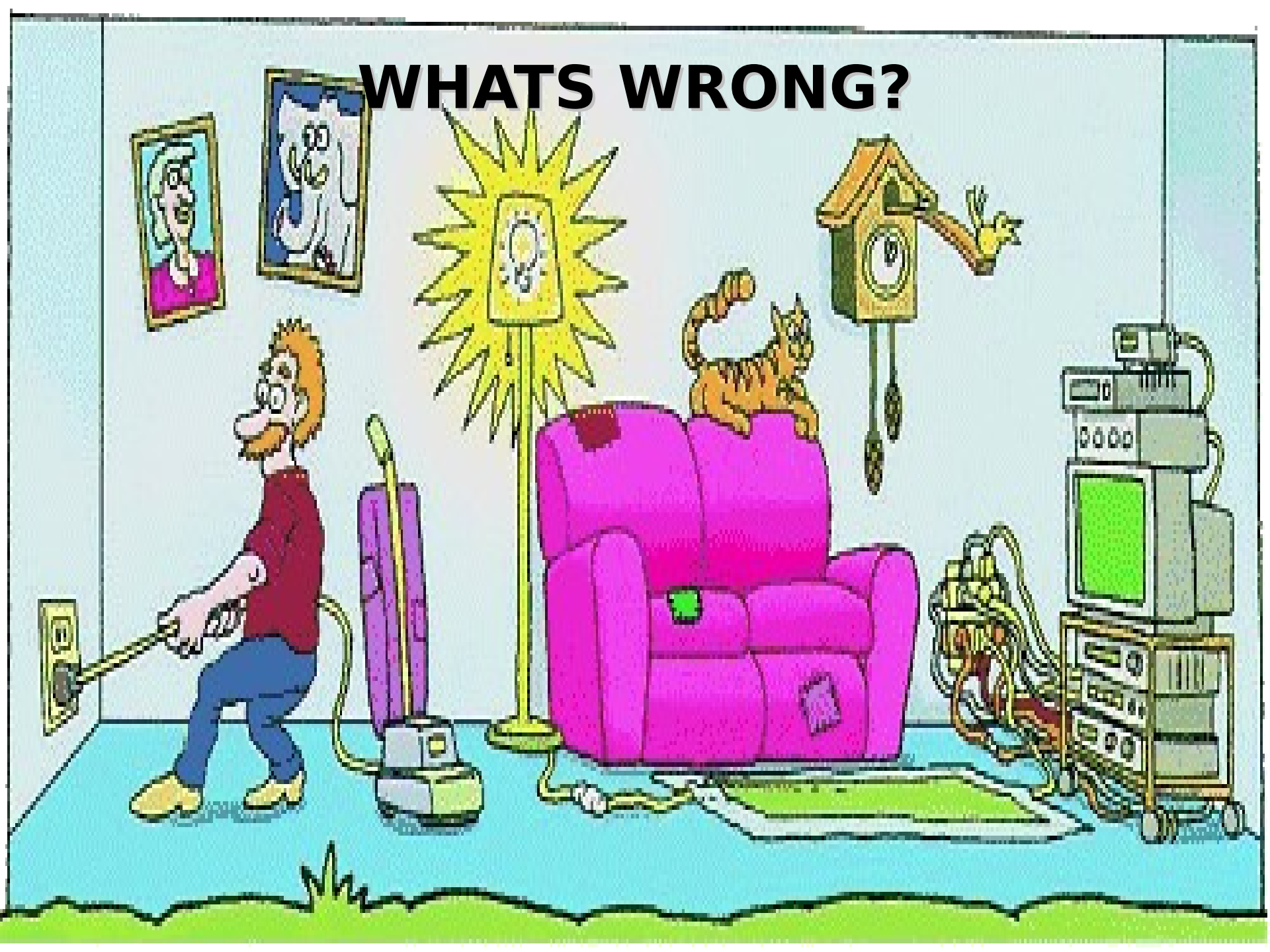


- **Never defeat the grounding feature**
- **Use an adapter to connect the heater's 3-prong plug, if you do not have a 3-hole outlet. Make sure the adapter ground wire or tab is attached to the outlet.**

Space Heaters

Q. Are heaters placed where they cannot be knocked over, and away from furnishings and flammable materials, such as curtains or rugs?

- **Relocate heaters away from passageways and flammable materials such as curtains, rugs, furniture or newspaper.**


WHATS WRONG?

Electrical cord under rug
Too bright a bulb in lamp
Dad pulling vacuum cord
Outlet overloaded
Too many electronics
Dad vacuuming